

Point of Order

[Translation]

POINTS OF ORDER

ALLEGATION OF FILIBUSTER ON BILL C-72

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I want to urge the House to consider the facts as they are and not as the Deputy Prime Minister sees them with respect to the matter of the debate on Bill C-72.

I want to get back to it because I think some Members have been suggesting that the whole exercise has turned into a filibuster.

[English]

The Deputy Prime Minister has repeated for days and weeks this filibuster obsession of his. After having had the bells ring for two solid weeks, he would know what a filibuster is. I want to remind him that Bill C-72 at second reading was here for three days only, February 8, February 9, and March 7. There was a month's delay when the Government had to deal with its own back-bench reaction, at which time we all heard and read about its hesitation in facing this Bill. There was an official time of nine hours and 37 minutes of debate. That is hardly a filibuster.

I want to remind the Minister and the House that on second reading on February 8 we had a total of three hours and 19 minutes debate, on February 9, a total of six hours and 49 minutes debate and a cumulative total on March 7 of nine hours—

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: I think that, obviously, it is not a filibuster.

When the Hon. Member rises on a point of order, naturally . . .

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, my point of order is that it is neither acceptable nor proper in this House to impute motives to a Member or a group of Members regarding a debate or a division. The Deputy Prime Minister keeps repeating . . .

[English]

He is imputing motives. He is breaking the rules of this House. I ask him to stop that kind of harassment—how is that for a word?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: Poor baby!

Mr. Benjamin: Point of order.

Mr. Speaker: I suppose, in the interests of fairness, I should hear the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin) and then I will hear the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski). But I want to indicate that I will not hear Members for too long because it does not seem to me to be much of a point of order.

Mr. Benjamin: Mr. Speaker, my point of order is a different one, if the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister is replying to the first one.

Mr. Speaker: If the Hon. Member's point of order is a different one, I will hear from him in due course.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council, and President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, in reply to my good friend, I think he knows that I never contravene the rules of this House intentionally, nor do I harass intentionally. What I was referring to is one day during the course of Question Period when both opposition Parties challenged me to bring on the Bill and they would pass it immediately. I took up that challenge. They decided not to pass it immediately. They decided to speak a little longer. That is the filibuster to which I was referring.

Mr. Speaker: I suppose the role the Chair at a point like this is to be satisfied that both sides have had their say.

REQUEST THAT MINISTER TABLE DOCUMENT

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): Mr. Speaker, I have been looking at Beauchesne's Fifth Edition, Citation 327. I would ask the Chair's guidance about my point of order, or that he give consideration to it.

There is a fine line between "read or quote from a dispatch or other state paper not before the House". In response to a question by the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. Harris), the Minister of Transport (Mr. Crosbie) used information from the rationalization studies of the Canadian National Railways to the effect that the rationalization studies of the CNR showed how much money it could save regarding the Moncton shops. I admit at the outset that that is not a direct quote or citing of the document. Surely the hon. gentleman, the Minister of Transport is going to extra lengths to skirt the rule.

● (1510)

I am asking, Sir, that you check the "blues" and consider my point of order as to whether or not the Minister of Transport should table forthwith rationalization studies of Canadian National Railway regarding the Moncton shops.

Mr. Speaker: I have heard the Hon. Member. Perhaps the Parliamentary Secretary wishes to respond.

Mr. Richard Grisé (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin). We will check the "blues" and I will bring the matter to the attention of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Crosbie) and report as quickly as possible.

Mr. Speaker: I will give this matter my consideration since the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin) is a very senior Member in this place. I note, however, that the Hon.